



Guidance notes for all service types on completing the fire safety checklist

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Introduction

As an applicant, you have accessed a Fire Safety Checklist form as part of the supporting documentation for your application for registration/variation. Please complete the form and sign the declaration at the end. By doing so you are confirming/declaring that your premises are safe for your service users, staff, and visitors, and that you have complied with the following fire safety legislation:

- The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 Part 3
- The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006

Please note:

- The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service may inspect your premises to confirm your compliance, or to enforce the legislation if necessary
- Your application will not be processed without a completed Fire Safety Checklist and Fire Safety Checklist Confirmation - to confirm that the checklist has been sent to your local Fire and Rescue Service

These guidance notes are intended to help you complete the Fire Safety Checklist. The notes contain basic guidance only. For more detailed guidance you should read the sector specific guidance within the information on

- <https://www.gov.scot/policies/fire-and-rescue/non-domestic-fire-safety/>; or
- https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/1844/Guidance_for_childminders_on_fire_precautions_in_domestic_childminding_premises.pdf for childminders

Or ask your local Fire Safety Enforcement Officer for advice. Once completed, the Fire Safety Checklist must be emailed to your local Fire and Rescue Service using the contact details found here <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/business-advice/concerns-queries-and-complaints/>

Who should complete the Fire Safety Checklist?

You, the applicant/provider, should complete the form. Within the legislation above you are considered the Dutyholder as you have responsibility for the management, including fire safety management of the premises. You should also be the person most able to complete the Fire Safety Checklist due to your knowledge of your premises, and to rectify any deficiencies before submitting your application.

How should the Fire Safety Checklist be completed?

The Fire Safety Checklist is a basic survey of the fire safety measures in your premises. If your care service has more than one premises, a separate Fire Safety Checklist is required for each premises. It asks the same questions that you should ask when carrying out a risk assessment. Answers are limited to Yes, No or Not Applicable (N/A) and you simply tick the relevant box. To help you, some boxes are blanked out, as these answers would be incorrect.

Take time to read these guidance notes and the form and then take a look around your premises. Look at your fire safety risk assessment (you could review it at the same time), log book and other relevant records. If you do not personally carry out any tests or training speak to the person who does. These simple steps should give you all the information you need.

How do I know what is inadequate?

Most fire safety precautions are simple common sense. For example, if a self-closing fire door is wedged open it is inadequate, but can be fixed by removing the wedge and instructing staff. Competent persons should maintain more complex precautions, such as fire alarm systems, but you should have records of this in your log book. If in doubt you could test a system to make sure it works.

If any fire safety precaution is inadequate, or you are not sure, answer NO. After the survey you should plan how you will rectify the inadequacies.

Completing the Fire Safety Checklist Form

Applicant / organisation information

Please ensure that your name and address (or that of the organisation) and other relevant contact details are clearly legible.

Type of Care Service

For example, Care Home, Day Care, Secure Accommodation, Childminding etc.

Fire Safety Risk Assessment

The fire safety legislation above requires a Dutyholder to carry out a fire safety risk assessment in the workplace. This is usually the person responsible for management in the workplace. The risk assessment should:

- assess the risk of fire in the premises, and any control measures that can reduce risk;
- check that fire can be detected in a reasonable time and people can be warned of fire;
- check that all people in the premises can evacuate safely;
- provide suitable fire fighting equipment;
- ensure that those in the premises know what to do in the event of a fire;
- ensure testing and maintenance of fire safety equipment and systems takes place.

As you are applying for registration/variation, there must be a written record of the significant findings of the assessment. Any action plan resulting from the assessment should also be recorded. The fire safety risk assessment should be reviewed at least once a year, or when there are significant changes in staff, layout or combustible materials in the premises. Note the checklist does not constitute the full Fire Safety Risk Assessment required by the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 part 3, but should be considered as an initial audit.

Escape Routes and Doors

All escape routes must be kept clear of obstructions and combustible materials. You must ensure that self-closing doors are not wedged open and are available for use at all times that the premises is occupied. You should not store anything flammable

on an escape route, even temporarily. For guidance, an escape route should not be narrower than any doorway on the route. Fire exit signs and notices are used to direct people to the escape route so must be visible and legible. If in doubt, try following the escape route yourself.

For security reasons an emergency exit door can be secured with a push bar/pad or similar device. These must work easily, without forcing them. Emergency exits must not be key-locked when the building is occupied, even if the key is left in the lock. In commercial settings door locks requiring the use of keys by persons evacuating the premises are not desirable. In domestic childminding settings the general recommendation is for a thumb turn lock and/or security chain. There is always a need to balance security and availability of escape routes. If you are a childminder, see [Guidance for childminders on fire precautions in domestic premises](#) for more information on this.

Some doors are fire resisting and self-closing. These are designed to stop fire spreading, giving more time for escape and reducing damage. They are only effective if they are a good fit in the frame, close fully from any angle and are not wedged or held open. Devices are available to allow care users personal choice and management the ability to have doors open during normal conditions. These devices will operate and close the door in the event of a fire.

Firefighting Equipment and Extinguishers

The number, type and location of fire extinguishers should be determined by the fire safety risk assessment. Usually you will need to provide fire extinguishers for general firefighting and to cover special risks. If you have a kitchen you will also need a fire blanket for the hazards associated with cooking. If you are a childminder, see [Guidance for childminders on fire precautions in domestic premises](#) for more information on this.

Fire extinguishers for general firefighting should be sited on escape routes, at or near the final exit. You may refer to BS 5306 part 8 current edition for advice.

Risks such as computer rooms, electrical equipment, large fridges etc. will need fire extinguishers that do not cause injury to the user or damage to the equipment. You should seek specialist advice about fire extinguishers for special risks.

Smoke Alarms, Fire Warning System and Automatic Fire Detection

New legislation comes into force in February 2022 which will require as the minimum standard all domestic accommodation in Scotland to be provided with interconnected detectors. They can be mains wired OR sealed tamper-proof units with long-life lithium batteries. To be installed as follows:

- at least one optical smoke detector in each hallway of each floor
- a heat detector within each kitchen
- a means of detecting fire within the most commonly occupied room (this is often the living room)

Whilst not specifically mentioned by the domestic regulations, consideration should also be given to rooms such as boiler rooms and utility rooms, as they pose a greater fire risk.

Your home layout and the location of child accommodation areas will determine how many smoke alarms you will need. You should look at the room layouts for guidance on how many you should have for daytime use only. The alarm signal must be capable of being heard throughout the building, and in any outbuildings. All fire warning or detection systems should be installed by a competent person, to the current British Standard 5839 Part 6 current edition. Mains electric systems must have a battery back-up for the sounders and usually this will power the entire system in the event of a mains failure. If you doubt the existing system is adequate, either test it, or seek specialist advice.

All fire alarms should be backed up with a 999 call to the fire and rescue service. Members of staff may be delegated to do this from a safer location.

Response to avoidable unwanted fire signals (false alarms) places an unnecessary burden on the resources and budget of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and endangers the safety of fire crews and the general public. Disruption caused in your premises by false alarms places similar unnecessary burdens on your business, your employees and (where applicable) your service users. It is your responsibility to prevent false alarms, however the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is committed to reducing unwanted fire calls and will offer support and guidance if requested.

Emergency Fire Action Plan and Staff Training

Your fire safety risk assessment should ensure that people in your premises know what to do if a fire occurs. You should work out a simple emergency fire action plan including:

- what to do if you (or another adult) discover a fire;
- how to sound the fire alarm;
- how to call the fire and rescue service;
- what to do if you (or another adult) hear the fire alarm i.e. how to escape from the premises;
- how to marshal and guide service users to safety, including checking toilets etc.;
- where to assemble outside, in a place of safety.

All carers should be trained regularly so that they know what you expect them to do if fire occurs. Anyone with a special responsibility e.g. calling the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, or checking rooms, should get specific training to do this. You can test this with regular fire drills. Firefighting should only be carried out by suitably trained staff, except in circumstances where firefighting is required to affect an escape.

There are no fixed intervals for training, but all staff should receive training on their induction. It is recommended that fire training be carried out at least once a year after the initial training. Details of the training and who received it should be recorded in the log book.

The frequency of drills for each building will be different and should reflect the level of risk. Fire drills should take place at least twice a year. This gives an opportunity to test the emergency fire action plan and alarms.

General

You are responsible for ensuring that all fire safety systems and are fully effective. The best way to do this is regular maintenance and training, and the best evidence of this is a fire log book that is used to record this. There is no fixed format for a log book, but it should contain all relevant information, e.g. dates and results of tests, dates and names from training sessions. Testing and maintenance is usually covered by codes of practice and a competent, adequately trained or experienced person should always carry out tests. A competent person should carry out staff training. You may be competent to carry out some or all of the tests and training, but if in doubt you should seek advice.

WARNING: Failure to adequately maintain or manage any fire safety system may also be deemed to place employees and others in danger, which contravenes the Fire Safety Legislation above. This may lead to criminal prosecution.

Recommended frequency of testing and maintenance:

System/training	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Three monthly	Six monthly	Annually
Escape Routes and Doors	Walk through premises and check routes	Visual check, test doors				
Fire extinguishers/ Fire Blanket		Visual check for leaks, tampering				Service and Test
Fire Warning System Smoke Alarms		System test - set off a different detector / call point each week			Inspection and Service	
Automatic Fire Detection					Inspection and Service	
Fire Drill					Fire Drill	

Advice is also available on <https://www.gov.scot/policies/fire-and-rescue/> or <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/business-advice/>

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